



Child Care Fact Sheet

Our Goal

- Convene private sector, public sector, and working women to create innovative child care solutions and improve access to quality, affordable child care for all working families.

Fast Facts

- The average cost of child care is more than college tuition in 33 states and the District of Columbia.
- Mothers' contributions to household incomes are significant. Mothers provide at least half of the family's income in 40.9% of households with children under 18, up from 11.3% in 1960.
- A 10% increase in child care costs is associated with a 7.4% decline in labor force participation.
- The costs of inadequate child care totaled \$2 billion in 2016 due to employee absences, turnover, and lost workplace productivity.

Key Issues

- Parents need reliable and affordable child care to be able to upgrade their skills through education, enter the workforce, and remain employed.
- As child care costs increase, mothers leave the labor force. High child care costs are associated with less work, while more affordable child care is associated with higher labor force participation among mothers with young children.
- Parents that do return to work oftentimes face a significant financial hurdle. The cost of engaging others to provide child care can be substantial.
 - ✓ The hourly cost of center-based child care for a four-year old in 2017 ranged from \$2.34 in Mississippi to \$9.33 in the District of Columbia, based on data from Child Care Aware of America. On average, these costs represent 24% of the median hourly wage across states and pose a substantial cost to work when layered on top of taxes on earnings.
- Workers with nonstandard and unpredictable schedules often rely on informal or family care and cannot provide work hours in advance, limiting their ability to apply for child care subsidies.
 - ✓ For example, about 44% of single mothers with young children work in retail or food service. These jobs typically require nonstandard and non-day schedules.

Our Work in Action

- On March 28, 2018, the Women's Bureau kicked off a series of child care stakeholder engagement sessions at the U.S. Department of Labor with Secretary Alexander Acosta and Advisor to the President Ivanka Trump. Participants included a diverse group of stakeholders who discussed the challenges and solutions to improving families' access to affordable, quality child care, as well as consider the impact that access to child care has on all aspects of the workforce.
- The Women's Bureau held additional stakeholder engagement sessions in 10 cities across the country between June and October 2018 focusing on innovative solutions that state officials, community leaders, and businesses are taking to help families access child care.
- The Women's Bureau also initiated a new project to create a public-use database of child care costs based on local area data that will enable a better understanding of the effects of these costs on women's labor force participation. This is the first data of its kind to be available at this more granular level.